

Message Text

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61

ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 SS-15 PCH-04 SCEM-02

EB-11 INT-08 COME-00 OMB-01 /140 R

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S/ PRS: CBRAV (INFO)

NEA/ SBUTCHER

AF/ P: GAFRIEDMAN

IO/ P: FBLACHLY

NEA/ EGY: MSTERNER

H: KFOLGER (INFO)

EUR/ P: ESAVAGE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION NATO
USINT BAGHDAD BY POUCH
AMEMBASSY SANAA BY POUCH

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO

E. O. 22652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN' S PRESS BRIEFING

APRIL 19, 1973:

QUOTE: Q. THE REPORT IN THE PAPER THIS MORNING CONCERNING
THE SAUDI ARABIAN THREAT TO CUT OFF OIL TO THE UNITED STATES
TO CHANGE ITS MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM -- DO YOU BELIEVE THAT
THREAT?

A. I SUPPOSE WHAT I SHOULD SAY IS THAT WE HAVE NOTED THE
QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO MR. YAMANI, BUT I HAVE NO DIRECT
COMMENT ON THEM AND WOULDN' T CARE TO CHARACTERIZE THEM FOR
YOU.

Q. IN HIS TALKS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS HERE,
DID HE EXPRESS THOSE SENTIMENTS?

A. WELL, WHILE HE WAS HERE, MR. YAMANI CALLED ON A NUMBER
OF ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS FOR FAIRLY WIDE- RANGING TALKS
INCLUDING THE SECRETARY AND UNDER SECRETARY CASEY, EARLIER
THIS WEEK. HE DID, IN THE COURSE OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS,
DISCUSS PROSPECTS FOR SAUDI ARABIA INCREASING ITS OIL
PRODUCTION ABOVE ITS PRESENT LEVELS; AND THERE WAS AN
EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. BUT I AM NOT PRE-
PARED HERE TO GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS.

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YOU MIGHT WANT TO GO BACK AND LOOK AT REMARKS WHICH

SECRETARY ROGERS MADE IN THIS ROOM IN MID- FEBRUARY -- FEBRUARY 15, I BELIEVE -- WITH RESPECT TO THE QUESTION OF AMERICAN DEPENDENCE ON MIDDLE EASTERN OIL AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO AMERICAN POLICY. OBVIOUSLY, ACCESS TO OIL IS AN IMPORTANT AMERICAN INTEREST. EQUALLY OBVIOUSLY, WE DESIRE TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB COUNTRIES FOR MANY REASONS, OF WHICH THIS IS REALLY ONLY ONE.

IT IS AMERICAN POLICY TO GIVE CONSIDERABLE PRIORITY TO THE SEARCH FOR PEACE -- AS BETWEEN THE ARABS AND ISRAELIS -- AND THAT THESE KINDS OF CONSIDERATIONS SIMPLY UNDERSCORE, ONCE AGAIN AND IN A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT CONTEXT THAN WE NORMALLY ADDRESS OURSELVES TO, THE IMPORTANCE OF PURSUING THAT POLICY.

I MIGHT SAY THAT WE'VE HAD A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE SAUDIS ON OIL MATTERS. BY MY UNDERSTANDING OF IT, THEY HAVE NOW INDICATED AN INTEREST -- WHICH I BELIEVE IS REFLECTED IN THIS STORY THIS MORNING -- IN JOINT VENTURES WITH AMERICAN COMPANIES FOR INVESTMENT BOTH IN SAUDI ARABIA AND IN THE UNITED STATES. AND, IN THAT RESPECT, WE ARE ENCOURAGING INTERESTED AMERICAN COMPANIES TO PURSUE THESE POSSIBILITIES.

Q. ARE YOU OBJECTING TO THE THESIS THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD CHANGE ITS POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL BECAUSE OF THE CONSIDERATION OF OIL?

A. WELL, IF I HAD TO STRIP THIS COUNTRY' S POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST DOWN TO ITS NUBBIN, I WOULD CAST IT VERY MUCH AS A SEARCH, OR AN ATTEMPT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SEARCH, TO SOME FORM OF LASTING SETTLEMENT AS BETWEEN THE PROTAGONISTS IN THE AREA.

Q. TO PURSUE ONE OF YOUR EARLIER COMMENTS, I THINK YOU SAID SOMETHING LIKE: " THESE KINDS OF CONSIDERATIONS SIMPLY UNDERSCORE ONCE AGAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF PURSUING THAT POLICY." IS THAT TO SUGGEST THAT THE NEED FOR OIL, WITHIN A CONTEXT OF A GROWING FUEL SHORTAGE, IS AN ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON THE UNITED STATES NOW?

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A. NO. I THINK I'D SAY ON -- WELL, ON BACKGROUND, I THINK WHAT ONE HAS HONESTLY TO SAY IN THAT RESPECT IS THAT -- AND THIS IS ESSENTIALLY WHAT I WAS TRYING TO SAY --

IS THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS WHICH ACCOUNT FOR,

UNDERLINE, OUR POLICY -- BE THEY POLITICAL, WHICH IS THE MANNER IN WHICH WE NORMALLY ADDRESS THIS SUBJECT IN THIS ROOM AND ELSEWHERE -- OR ECONOMIC, AS IN THE CASE OF OUR ENERGY REQUIREMENTS IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

Q. YOU SAID THAT THERE WAS AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MIDDLE EAST WITH MR. YAMANI. DID THE DEPARTMENT DISCUSS WITH HIM THE QUESTION OF TERRORISM IN THE REGION -- AND, PARTICULARLY, SAUDI SUPPORT TO THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION?

A. I'M FRANK TO SAY I DON'T KNOW. END QUOTE.

2. ABOVE QUESTIONS REFERRED TO APRIL 19 WASHINGTON POST FRONT PAGE STORY OF INTERVIEW WITH SAUDI MINISTER YAMANI. SUMMARY OF STORY SENT WIRELESS FILE APRIL 19. ROGERS

NOTE BY OC/ T: POUCHED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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